



FEEDBACK STARTER KIT PILOT REPORT

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BACKGROUND

An IFRC consultant supporting the set up of feedback systems using the new [IFRC Feedback Starter Kit](#) visited Chikwawa, Malawi, in May 2019. The trip visit was to introduce and pilot the feedback starter kit which comprises; a guide to setting up a feedback and complaints systems, and tools such as the data collection form, the feedback logbook, feedback report template and the frequently asked questions (FAQ) handbook that work together to open and close the feedback loop. Together these documents help in collecting feedback and providing feedback to the community. The starter kit therefore is a systematic way of looking at feedback, which helps to store and compare feedback across different geographic localities, age groups, genders and even programs.

The system starts with volunteers on the ground who use the forms to collect feedback from the community and based on the urgency of the issue they either send the form to staff immediately (in case of urgent cases like abuse) or the area leaders collect all the volunteer feedback forms from volunteers in their cluster and send them to responsible staff at the end of each month. Each form is then entered into the logbook which then categorizes the issues as to whether they are rumors, suggestions, questions, compliments or complaints and then categorizes these into their specific sectors or thematic areas; General, Health, Protection, Gender, Inclusion, PSS, Relief, CASH, Shelter or WASH. From this analysis frequently asked questions are then generated and summarized into a handbook with relevant answers. This handbook is then provided to the volunteers to provide this information to the community if they meet the same questions again, hence closing the feedback loop.

THE PILOT

The pilot was conducted for two days in Chapananga Chikwawa where the community resilience project is being implemented. The first day we oriented volunteer coaches and area leaders for the Timbenao cluster and the Galonga and Tombondera clusters the following day. At the end of these orientation sessions the participants conducted interviews where they collected information and completed the feedbacks forms. A plenary was conducted soon after to get a feeling of how they found the forms. Most of them appreciated that the form was simple enough and just needed a few clarifications.



Picture 1: The participants test the forms among themselves during the Coaches and Area leaders' orientation at Phwadzi CDSS.

The major challenge for the pilot however was the timing as it was during the Malawian election week, hence the consultant moved to Blantyre on safety grounds and then staff were also deployed to the election monitoring and first aid support. This resulted in very little time to orient each other and clarify the challenges using the documents and also time spent in the field to get rich enough data from the other programs i.e. the floods response. As the CBHFA volunteers have been doing household visits for a very long time and are very familiar with the people in the community, it was easier for them to administer the form/questionnaire.

DATA COLLECTION, ENTRY AND ANALYSIS – processes and challenges

The volunteers were all oriented on the use of the forms in June during the CEA orientation that took place at Phwadzi primary school and they appreciated that the shortness of the form was very good since it would not be difficult to fill. Thus, it was agreed, and feedback was collected. Despite orienting the volunteers on the use of the forms however, some still found difficulties in filling the forms which delayed them from handing the forms in. These challenges however were dealt with by the coaches who had gone through a more thorough and personalized orientation with the IFRC consultant.

Data entry was also very slow due to the many drop downs that are in the logbook. With 130+ forms to enter the process can be slow. Despite this however, the FAQ handbook has been updated by just analyzing the feedback from the forms and noting the frequently asked questions. The FAQ was also shared with the District Health Office social welfare office and police for their input and these were updated in the handbook. It is worth noting however that most of the questions that are being asked in the recently collected forms are very similar to those asked during the initial pilot. Therefore, only one question on protection has been added into the FAQ handbook since. Many of the responses have also been compliments of the work the National Society is doing in Chapananga thus are not for the FAQ handbook.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The form should be put into ODK or any other mobile data collection tool for easy entry by the volunteers, this will definitely improve speed of entry and thus analysis of the feedback.
- There should be a responsible officer (focal point) for this system preferably the district planning, quality and learning officer.

WAY FORWARD

We have identified one of the community resilience project team as a CEA focal person for now and he will be responsible for ensuring that all feedback documents are updated on a monthly basis. The next step is to provide the volunteers with the translated FAQ handbook and have

them test it out. With the handbook we should have most questions easily answered in the field and thus less questions coming to the district.

The feedback kit looks to be a very good tool in understanding the community viewpoint of the work we are doing thus it would be beneficial to extend it to the other Malawi Red Cross programmes. For the time being however, we shall use the feedback starter kit to analyze suggestion box data, as we also continue to enter the forms collected from the volunteers.